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**HIGHLIGHTS IN THIS REPORT**

Livestock Slaughter  
 Average Prices Received by Farmers  
 U.S. Farm Labor & Wage Rates

**Louisiana Livestock Slaughter**

Commercial red meat production in Louisiana during April totaled 0.7 million pounds, down 13 percent from March and 36 percent below the previous year.

There were 700 head of **cattle** slaughtered during April, unchanged from March but 500 head below the previous year. Average live weight was 878 pounds, up 73 pounds from the previous month but 58 pounds below April 2005. Total live weight, at 633,000 pounds, was 15 percent above the previous month but 44 percent below the previous year.

**Calves** slaughtered during April totaled 300 head, down 100 head from March and 200 head below the previous year. Live weight averaged 521 pounds, up 27 pounds from March and 19 pounds above April 2005. Total live weight, at 171,000 pounds, was down 15 percent from March and 28 percent below the previous year.

The number of **hogs** slaughtered during April totaled 1,500 head, down 400 head from the previous month but 100 head above the previous year. Average live weight was 188 pounds, down 22 pounds from March and 7 pounds below the previous year. Total live weight was 280,000 pounds, 29 percent below March but 6 percent above a year ago.

The number of **sheep** slaughtered during April was 100 head, down 100 head from March but the same as the previous year. Live weight averaged 92 pounds, down 13 pounds from the previous month but 5 pounds above the previous year.

**United States Livestock Slaughter**

**Commercial red meat production** for the United States totaled 3.61 billion pounds in April, down slightly from the 3.62 billion pounds produced in April 2005.

April 2006 contained 20 weekdays (including no holidays) and 5 Saturdays. April 2005 contained 21 weekdays (including no holidays) and 5 Saturdays.

**Beef production**, at 1.97 billion pounds, was 5 percent above the previous year. Cattle slaughter totaled 2.61 million head, up 2 percent from April 2005. The average live weight was up 28 pounds from the previous year, at 1,246 pounds.

**Veal production** totaled 10.9 million pounds, 16 percent below April a year ago. Calf slaughter totaled 47,500 head, down 23 percent from April 2005. The average live weight was 26 pounds above last year, at 379 pounds.

**Pork production** totaled 1.61 billion pounds, down 5 percent from the previous year. Hog kill totaled 7.96 million head, 6 percent below April 2005. The average live weight was 1 pound above the previous year, at 272 pounds.

**Lamb and mutton production**, at 17.0 million pounds, was up 9 percent from April 2005. Sheep slaughter totaled 248,500 head, 13 percent above last year. The average live weight was 136 pounds, down 5 pounds from April a year ago.

**January to April 2006 commercial red meat production** was 15.1 billion pounds, up 4 percent from 2005. Accumulated beef production was up 6 percent from last year; veal was down 6 percent; pork was up 1 percent from last year and lamb and mutton production was up 2 percent.

**Commercial Livestock Slaughter and Red Meat Production**

Item	Louisiana					United States			
	March	April		January - April		April		January - April	
	2006	2005	2006	2005	2006	2005	2006	2005	2006
-----Number, thousand head-----									
Cattle	0.7	1.2	0.7	5.0	2.7	2,560.3	2,607.4	10,156.4	10,447.5
Calves	0.4	0.5	0.3	1.7	1.3	61.6	47.5	259.2	215.3
Hogs	1.9	1.4	1.5	7.6	6.4	8,445.0	7,955.6	33,982.7	34,160.1
Sheep & Lambs	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.7	0.6	220.7	248.5	924.4	924.3
-----Total live weight, thousand pounds-----									
Cattle	550	1,134	633	4,447	2,292	3,118,373	3,248,884	12,614,569	13,274,466
Calves	202	237	171	858	710	21,738	17,990	86,562	79,531
Hogs	396	265	280	1,540	1,305	2,285,822	2,167,521	9,187,252	9,304,493
Sheep & Lambs	18	10	10	110	103	31,050	33,813	128,622	131,720
-----Average live weight, pounds-----									
Cattle	805	936	878	889	849	1,218	1,246	1,242	1,271
Calves	494	502	521	505	546	353	379	334	369
Hogs	210	195	188	203	204	271	272	270	272
Sheep & Lambs	105	87	92	77	62	141	136	139	142
-----Million pounds-----									
Red Meat	0.8	1.1	0.7	4.5	2.9	3,619.7	3,614.4	14,569.6	15,100.4

## May Farm Prices Received Index Increased 1 Point From Last Month

The preliminary All Farm Products Index of Prices Received by Farmers in May, at 114, based on 1990-92=100, increased 1 point from April. The Crop Index was up 3 points, but the Livestock Index decreased 1 point. Producers received higher prices for lettuce, hogs, onions and grapefruit. Lower prices were received for cattle, asparagus, tomatoes and eggs. The overall index is also affected by the seasonal change based on a 3-year average mix of commodities producers sell. Increased average marketings of grapes, sweet corn, cantaloupe and broilers offset decreased marketings of cattle, milk, calves and apples.

Preliminary All Farm Products Index was down 5 points from May 2005. The Food Commodities Index, at 115, increased 1 point from last month but decreased 7 points from May 2005

## Prices Paid Index Unchanged

The preliminary May Index of Prices Paid for Commodities and Services, Interest, Taxes, and Farm Wage Rates was 146 percent of the 1990-92 average. The Index was unchanged from April but 6 points above May 2005. Lower prices in May for feeder cattle, nitrogen fertilizers, feeder pigs, and LP gas offset higher prices for diesel fuel, gasoline, hay & forages and feed grains.

## Average Prices Received by Farmers: Louisiana and United States

Item	Louisiana			United States		
	Entire Month		Preliminary	Entire Month		Preliminary
	May 2005	April 2006	May 2006 <sup>1</sup>	May 2005	April 2006	May 2006 <sup>1</sup>
	-----Dollars-----			-----Dollars-----		
Soybeans, per bushel	6.22	5.54	5.80	6.21	5.52	5.62
Rice, per cwt	7.14	8.20	8.37	6.98	8.19	7.99
Upland cotton, per pound	.398	.464	2/ .458	.396	.486	2/ .472
Hay, all, baled, per ton	n/a	n/a	n/a	107.00	106.00	114.00
Beef Cattle, per cwt <sup>3</sup>	72.10	62.90	62.70	92.10	84.80	81.80
Steers & Heifers, per cwt	110.00	101.00	102.00	96.10	89.30	85.80
Cows, per cwt <sup>4</sup>	55.00	47.30	45.00	58.30	48.50	48.00
Calves, per cwt	129.00	121.00	120.00	143.00	135.00	132.00
Broilers, live, per pound	n/a	n/a	n/a	.440	.340	.340
Eggs, all, per dozen	n/a	n/a	n/a	.456	.512	.439
Milk, all, per cwt <sup>5</sup>	n/a	n/a	n/a	14.70	12.10	12.00

<sup>1</sup> Mid-month.

<sup>2</sup> Preliminary prices are based on sales during the first half of the month.

<sup>3</sup> "Cows" and "steers and heifers" combined.

<sup>4</sup> Beef cows and cull dairy cows sold for slaughter.

<sup>5</sup> Before deductions for hauling and government withholdings. Includes bulk tank, quantity, and other premiums. Excludes hauling subsidies.

n/a = not available

## United States Farm Labor

There were 956,000 hired workers on the nation's farms and ranches during the week of April 9-15, 2006, down 4 percent from a year ago. Of these hired workers, 718,000 workers were hired directly by farm operators. Agricultural service employees on farms and ranches made up the remaining 238,000 workers.

Farm operators paid their hired workers an average wage of \$9.79 per hour during the April 2006 reference week, up 44 cents from a year earlier. Field workers received an average of \$8.96 per hour, up 40 cents from last April, while livestock workers earned \$9.30 per hour compared with \$9.14 a year earlier. The field and livestock worker combined wage rate, at \$9.07 per hour, was up 35 cents from last year.

The number of hours worked averaged 40.8 hours for hired workers during the survey week, up 2 percent from a year ago.

**Farm Labor & Wage Rates: Delta and United States**

Item	Delta <sup>1</sup>			United States		
	April 10-16 2005	January 8-14 2006	April 9-15 2006	April 10-16 2005	January <sup>2</sup> 8-14 2006	April 9-15 2006
	-----Thousand Workers-----			-----Thousand Workers-----		
<b>Hired Workers (All)</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>1,000</b>	<b>794</b>	<b>956</b>
<b>Ag Service Workers</b>	---	---	---	247	180	238
<b>Hired Farm Workers</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>753</b>	<b>614</b>	<b>718</b>
150 Days or More	24	18	26	600	512	580
149 Days or Less	4	7	8	153	102	138
	-----Per Week-----			-----Per Week-----		
<b>Average Hours Worked</b> <b>(Hired Farm Workers)</b>	<b>39.4</b>	<b>31.2</b>	<b>40.6</b>	<b>39.9</b>	<b>38.2</b>	<b>40.8</b>
	-----Per Hour-----			-----Per Hour-----		
<b>Average Wage Rate</b> <b>(Hired Farm Workers)</b>	<b>\$7.64</b>	<b>\$8.68</b>	<b>\$8.00</b>	<b>\$9.35</b>	<b>\$10.10</b>	<b>\$9.79</b>
<b>By Type of Worker</b>						
Field	\$7.37	\$7.90	\$7.64	\$8.56	\$9.11	\$8.96
Livestock	\$7.18	\$8.40	\$8.15	\$9.14	\$9.26	\$9.30

<sup>1</sup>Arkansas, Louisiana and Mississippi.

<sup>2</sup>Revised.

---Data not published.

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